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ABSTRACT

When the Federal Trade Commission began an all-out drive in the summer of 1973 to alert the public to pitfalls in enrolling in some vocational and correspondence schools, several significant facts became clear: 10,000 different residential and home-study vocational schools serve about 3.3 million students who pay from $350 to $2000 for a program, knowledge of these schools, their operations, and their students is practically nil. The paper examines all available studies, research reports, and publications relevant to proprietary schools, presenting their findings in summary form. Acknowledging that reliable information has only become available within the last three years, the report concludes that Federal interest in proprietary education has increased, funds are available for research, and that it is time to reexamine assumptions regarding vocational education's "stepchild," proprietary education. (Author/MW)

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PROPRIETARY EDUCATION

A Search of the Literature

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University of California, Berkeley

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CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
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When the Federal Trade Commission began an all-out drive in the summer of 1973 to alert the public to pitfalls in enrolling in some vocational and correspondence schools, several significant facts became clear: There is a universe of some 10,000 different resident and home-study vocational schools that serve about 3.3 million students who pay anywhere from $350 to more than $2000 for a program, and our knowledge of these schools, their operations, and their students is practically nil.

One of the first important studies that looked at proprietary (profitmaking) schools, *An Exploratory Survey of Proprietary Vocational Schools*, was conducted by Harry Kincaid and Edward Podesta (1966) at the Stanford Research Institute. Their primary objective was to create an inventory of proprietary schools in Santa Clara County, California, to develop ideas to use in future studies and to formulate hypotheses to test. They found in 1965 that there were 700 proprietary schools in California--dominated by cosmetology schools--that concentrated on preparing people for employment. In California the Superintendent of Public Instruction oversees curriculum, staff, and enrollment solicitation. Local control is confined to licensing the institutions as commercial enterprises.

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They give thorough descriptions of resident proprietary schools by type in Santa Clara County and of the students who attend (by sex, age, day or night students), faculty make-up, and program costs. This information is supplemented by student interviews that explain the main reasons students choose proprietary schools--shorter course length and frequent starting dates, time not cluttered with nonvocational subjects. "Many pointed out that they could complete their course and recover their investment through earnings within a year after enrolling while their public counterparts still had a year to go in school [p.17]."

While they call for a detailed descriptive study of proprietaries and comparative studies with public schools, Kincaid and Podesta conclude that on the basis of enrollment data, proprietaries are making a substantial contribution to vocational training in programs also found in the public sector.

Another early attempt to compile a directory of private vocational offerings was made by a group of researchers at UC Berkeley in the School of Education. *Education in the Privately Owned Vocational Schools in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties* (1967), listed the number of schools of each type (semiprofessional, business, trade, specialized industry, personal and protective, parochial, other), the extent of their enrollment, and job placement. This study found a total of 13,275 students enrolled in both counties. The report cites the extensive placement services offered by most proprietaries and the close interaction with the industry or business community. They

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found that class size is generally smaller, students spend an average of 12-15 hours per week in class, and cite the oft-mentioned flexibility of day or evening classes and frequent starting dates. This report mentions that 9276 students are receiving vocational-technical education in proprietaries without any cost to the taxpayer. They conclude their report with suggestions for further research on student motivation, ~~prietary~~ proprietary school, and cooperative programs between public high schools and proprietaries.

Jay Miller's, *The Independent Business School in American Education* (1964) is a purely descriptive study which stressed the closeness of the business school with the business community and its adaptability to the business environment. The report is an advocacy piece and contains a great deal of superfluity. Miller speaks of the flexibility and diversity of programs in proprietary schools, and gives a fairly detailed report of program offerings in the private business school. He talks of the need for measurement of the quality of training but feels the only real measure lies "in the market place"--if a school turns out graduates with poor work habits or who fail to meet the employment standards, it won't make it in the business world. He also reports that the independent business school has generally welcomed state supervision and reiterates his feeling that the marketplace is more demanding than any government regulating agency.

By far the most exhaustive and definitive study completed to date is Harvey Belitsky's 91969), *Private Vocational Schools and Their Students*. He undertook the study to determine ways in which

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private vocational schools could be used in the training of "disadvantaged" persons. His survey found about 7000 private vocational schools in this country with 1.5 million students. Although these schools remain relatively unknown they are generally successful, Belitsky maintains, for they continue to exist in spite of slight recognition and often outright opposition by the public, public school authorities, and the government.

Belitsky's study is descriptive as well as evaluative and provided some of the first detailed information available. However, the descriptive data is limited in that it reflects only those schools accredited by the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools (only 10-15 percent of all proprietary schools are accredited by one of the four major accrediting agencies).

Belitsky's findings are most often the basis of other studies. In fact, the characteristics of proprietary schools that he defines as flexibility in operations, admissions and schedules, small class size, special course offerings, and instructor accountability for students, appear repeatedly in later studies.

Belitsky's study formed a jump-off place for other researchers. He raised questions about competition between the public and private sectors, relative effectiveness of training in both areas, the unavailability of loans to students in proprietary schools, and the lack of evaluative and regulatory agencies which were picked up and dealt with in later research.

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Another effort at evaluating the effectiveness of proprietary training was made by Kenneth Hoyt with his Specialty Oriented Students program (SOS), that began in 1962 with students from 136 postsecondary occupational schools. However, as of 1972 more than half of the 76 proprietary schools had withdrawn and the method Hoyt used to generate the original sample remains unclear. Hoyt has been following students from training into the job market to measure job success. Data were collected from 16,000 private school students and 7000 public school students, with one-year follow-up data available on more than half of those. Hoyt states that the public sector was generally more enthusiastic about the SOS program and he thinks the proprietaries lost interest because they didn't want their students' records made public. However, no conclusive results are available. His study has never been written up in a final report and the data remains spread out through several data banks across the country. Hoyt expresses his desire to gather this data, but also his frustration at reaching such a small number of proprietaries (32) out of the national universe of 8000.

The HEW Vocational Education Review Task Force (1970) was organized in the Office of the Secretary to point out current major issues and problems in vocational education. In their report, the section on proprietary vocational education relies heavily on data gathered by Belitsky and the Kincaid-Podesta study, and draws these together in a general description of proprietary schools.

The Task Force reports that proprietary schools are populated largely by four-year college dropouts and high school dropouts. They

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also report that the average "quality" of students in proprietaries --socioeconomic status, level of prior education and training, motivation, and inherent ability--is greater than with public school counterparts. This study reports that 70 percent of proprietary students complete their training while the comparable figure for community college students is between 30 and 40 percent.

The Task Force was effective in drawing together studies that had previously received little attention. One of these is the little-known study done at the Oklahoma State University Research Foundation (1969). The study involved 1264 proprietary students in Oklahoma, 75 percent of whom successfully completed their training. Of these, 97 percent were successfully placed in jobs, more than half of which were in the field they trained for. The median annual starting salary of graduating proprietary students tended to be significantly higher than public school graduates. These results can only be suggestive, however, since no student background characteristics were taken into account.

The Task Force also cites a limited study done by the Institute of Naval Studies that explored the relative efficiency of vocational education. The study suggests that private vocational schools are more efficient than public (U. S. Navy, electronic technician Type A) schools. The average Navy in-house cost per student was $2879, and the corresponding cost in proprietary schools was $1436 average. Even the highest proprietary school cost ($1899) was only 65 percent of the Navy pregraduate cost.

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The HEW report recommends paying more attention to proprietary schools, and that more serious consideration be given to contracting with proprietaries which have been under tuilized in spite of federal legislation.

Such a project was conducted under the Manpower Development Training Act to train "disadvantaged" people for employment through proprietary schools (MDTA Project, 1970). Proprietary schools in 18 states subcontracted for training with the United Business School Association. In some cases the UBSA subcontracted with the National Association for Trade and Technical Schools (NATTS) so more occupations could be included. Participation in this test program was limited to accredited schools, although the report pointed out that in some vocational areas there is no nationally recognized accrediting agency. A total of 1173 students was trained with a 30 percent dropout rate. The trainees were mainly female, 19-29 years of age, 12th-grade education, and most had been employed less than two years in clerical or sales work. The first contract involved training unemployed persons for entry-level jobs. The second contract aimed at training underemployed persons for promotion. In the Project Upgrade, 1194 students were enrolled, 659 of which completed their training--a dropout rate of 45 percent. Two-fifths of the trainees were successfully placed, but no performance data is available.

A study done by the American Institutes for Research under contract with USOE, *A Comparative Study of Proprietary and Nonproprietary Vocational Training Programs* (1972) is based on a survey in four major

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cities of both kinds of institutions (3340 students at 51 proprietary schools and 3610 students at 14 nonproprietary schools), in office, computer, health, and technical occupations. The researchers recognized the need for comprehensive data about proprietary schools, their students and their programs, and in the study undertook to answer three broad questions:

1) What are proprietary schools like and how do they compare with public schools offering similar programs?
2) What are proprietary students like and how do they compare to students who attend nonproprietary vocational schools?
3) What do students gain as a result of attending proprietary schools and how do their gains compare to the gains recorded by students who attend public schools?

The AIR study did not find significant differences anywhere. They found that both kinds of schools serve students who are very similar in sex, age, education, prior work experience, and family background, though a somewhat higher percentage of minority students exists in nonproprietary schools. They conclude also that proprietary schools are not in competition with nonproprietaries, but rather complement them. They cite the proprietaries' specific training, short courses, and fast responses to changes in industry and manpower demands and conclude that the profit motive of these schools has a positive impact on their quality and effectiveness. They find few differences in educational facilities of the schools which appear "adequate" in both arenas--while proprietaries seemed to have more favorable student-teacher

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ratios and more laboratory time. They found the teaching staffs of both kinds to be extremely similar and both proprietary and non-proprietary schools employ equally well-qualified teachers.

AIR reports that job success is nearly equivalent for the two types of schools and that accredited schools have similar success in placing their graduates as unaccredited schools.

For the wealth of results, the weaknesses in this study require careful assessing of the findings. One major weakness is the lumping together of public and private nonprofit schools under the general heading of nonproprietary, when in fact private nonprofit schools are much more like private profitmaking schools than like public. Another major weakness is in the sample, as almost half the proprietaries in the original sample refused to participate. The sample that did volunteer may be heavily biased.

The Inner City Fund (1972), under contract with HEW's Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, studied management techniques and incentives used to operate successful proprietary schools, to compare those techniques and incentives with those at community colleges, and to review federal policies affecting the utilization of proprietary vocational schools. Their case studies consisted of 20 accredited proprietary schools (primarily business schools) and two community colleges. The ICF chose what they considered to be the best representatives of each type of school rather than the typical, so the results are not generalizable.

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They note the growing tendency toward corporate ownership of proprietaries. They also point out the value in the proprietary schools' having a single well-defined mission--that of specific occupational training toward full-time employment in the shortest possible time. The profit motive of the owners and administrators is consistent with students' motive-preparation for employment and this, in turn, creates the innovativeness and flexibility so often noted in studies.

The ICF study reports that proprietary schools have only two major expenses--student recruitment and cost, and the quality control of program offerings. Placement is not usually a costly program because employers are anxious to hire students who have received their training at a school with a good reputation. The proprietary schools are more directly accountable to the employers than community colleges. They cite the success that proprietaries have in motivating the slow learners or dropouts who were not stimulated by public institutions and suggest that perhaps the conflicting needs and objectives of community colleges may deter them from developing effective curricula in any one program area--academic, vocational, or remedial.

The study finds that proprietary students complete their programs far more often than community college students in general, but community college students in vocational programs complete their programs almost as frequently as the proprietary student. Eighty-five to 90 percent of proprietary students completed some program--though

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they may have switched to an easier program within the school. Individual attention, faculty accountability, and frequent feedback on performance are cited as factors partially responsible for proprietary students' completions and motivating slow learners and dropouts.

The ICF study reports the community colleges' confusion over their mission weakens their placement service. They suggest that the proprietary schools' placement services are attractive to students--evidenced by their continued willingness to pay higher tuition rates. They also speculate that the costs to society at community colleges may be greater than at proprietaries.

The California Advisory Council on Vocational Education prepared a *Report of a Survey of Private Vocational Training Schools* (1972), in which they identified proprietary schools and contacted them to gather program data and enrollments. With a 53.6 percent response rate (which they estimated was low because proprietary school operators are "resistant to making public their operational procedures [because it] might jeopardize their competitive position" [p. 3]), they successfully identified 1788 private postsecondary vocational schools. They report that proprietaries in California have the capacity to train many more students than are currently being served.

W. D. Hyde, from the Comparative Education Center at the University of Chicago is currently undertaking a study of metropolitan proprietary schools in which he will study the changes in the number of schools, the curricula, and faculty characteristics. He also plans

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to study the relationship between proprietary schools and their flexibility to fluctuations in the labor market, and to examine the impact of community colleges offering similar programs as those in proprietary schools.

H. H. Katz, president emeritus of the Illinois Association of Trade and Technical Schools, attempts to demostrate the importance of private enterprise in providing career education in his study of the private school industry for the State of Illinois Advisory Council on Vocational Education (1973). Katz found that it is a $350 million industry in that state, consisting of 589 schools, serving more than 600,000 students annually. These schools, receive less publicity than schools in the public sector and are generally looked down upon by the conventional educational community because they make a profit. Katz feels it is a commonly held misconception "that technical and business education are for students with low or barely average high school grades and that college and university preparation is for citizens who are gifted with the highest mental potentials" [P. 16],--though he provides no concrete evidence to support his claim.

Katz cites an oft-quoted list of the advantages of independent private schools over other forms of training that were given in a 1970 report by the Republican Party Task Force on Education and Training as:

1) course length is very short--usually four months-one year. Same program in a community college would take two years and mean loss of possible earnings.

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2) course content is more specific, whereas public education requires concurrent study of nonvocational subjects.
3) placement service is provided to assist students because continuation of the school as a business enterprise depends on successful placement.

The Task Force also describes the flexibility of proprietary schools' fast responses to changes in business and manpower needs as well as student needs, and states that proprietaries generally have more up-to-date equipment than public schools.

However, Katz doesn't sweep dishonest proprietary school practices under the rug. He states that in the last six years the Post Office Department has investigated 385 correspondence schools, resulting in 120 criminal indictments and 61 convictions for mail fraud. He cites examples of misleading statements about course content and employment opportunities and believes more controls should be set up statewide and also on the federal level. Katz, like Miller, thinks that most proprietary schools offer honest training and expresses the belief that controls and regulation would remove the onus from the field as a whole, but feels the proprietaries should complement the public system rather than compete with it.

He reports, like the Inner City Fund Study, that the private school industry is not so much an area of individual entrepreneurs anymore, as 85 percent of all profitmaking schools are owned by well-known corporations. He predicts growth for the private school industry based

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on several reasons including increased congressional support, growing tendency to establish ovate licensing and change on the part of parents in recognizing that "not all children are college-oriented--and that trade-technical business education may be equally and, in some cases, more meaningful." [P. 153]

Wellford Wilms' first report on the study, Proprietary versus Public Vocational Training (1973), analyzes characteristics of 1370 students near graduation from 50 randomly selected public and proprietary vocational schools in four metropolitan areas. The major findings were as follows:

1. Students who attend proprietary schools tend to bring fewer resources to school with them than students training for similar occupations in public schools (community colleges and technical institutes). Compared with students in the public sector, proprietary students are more likely to be high school dropouts or graduates of the low-status "general" or "vocational" high school programs. The study reported a strong tendency for proprietary students to have weaker verbal skills, and for ethnic minority students to favor attending proprietary schools over nearby public schools offering the same training at no or relatively low cost.

2. Contrary to conventional wisdom which portrays the proprietary student as a highly motivated, goal-directed student, the study found no significant difference in the achievement motive between the two types of students.

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3. Students in proprietary schools are working and earning considerably less money than their public counterparts while in schools. This seems due to the fact that proprietary students go to school more intensely (30 hours per week on the average) than students in public schools (15 hours per week on the average), and have less time for work while in school.

4. However, the proprietary student will finish his program often in a quarter or a half of the time it takes the public student to finish, and be available for work. When asked about their salary expectations, public students' expectations far outstripped the proprietary students'; however, when Wilms controlled for the fact that the public students were working and earning more (and probably expected more) while in school, the difference in future expectations washes out.

The Wilms study reports that the selection process of students is different in both sectors. The students in proprietary schools received little guidance from high school counselors and teachers and relied instead on such sources of information as Yellow Pages and television commercials to choose a school, while students in public schools were often guided by high school counselors to their higher education choice at the local public school. He suggests this is partly due to public school authorities' ignorance about proprietaries.

In the second stage of this study, now underway, Wilms will follow up 3400 graduates of the same programs to measure their post-graduation success and control for differences in students' backgrounds.

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This data will be analyzed and published by late 1974.

Regulation and accreditation of proprietary schools is one of the major issues being discussed recently in articles, conferences, reports, and news stories, and brings the greatest publicity to the proprietaries. In fact, most of the public knowledge about proprietary schools is gained through these articles relating to regulation which often stress the negative side of the issues.

In a lecture given at the 28th National Conference on Higher Education, in March 1973, Jack Jones, president of the accredited 4-year proprietary business college, Jones College, points out that while 10% of nonprofit colleges are not accredited, only 10% to 15% of proprietary postsecondary schools *are* accredited, and that, therefore, the good schools are categorized with the bad:

> Proprietary education still has an onus, as does any minority group, that its lowest common denominator determines its image. They have to do about twice as much to get about half the recognition. [P. 3]

The subject of that conference was "The Education Amendments of 1972: Redefining the Post-Secondary Turf," and this redefinition is still taking place in 1973, giving more attention than ever before to proprietary vocational schools. In the 1972 Amendments, Congress defined a proprietary institution as one that is accredited by one of the four accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Commission of Education: The Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, The National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, The National Home Study Council, and

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The Accrediting Commission for Cosmetology Schools--and that offers educational programs not less than six months in length.

Jones reports that because of the Amendments of 1972 there is a growing recognition of the place of proprietary schools in higher education and refers to the inclusion of proprietary schools on the state coordinating committees to plan the allocation of federal monies. He predicts, like many recent articles, good years ahead for the proprietary schools.

In fact, even before the 1972 Amendments, things were picking up. In an article in *Business Week* in September 1969, "Making It In the Learning Trade," the proprietary school industry was reporting 30 to 38 percent pre-tax profits for investors, as the schools began making public stock available. In that article, Billy Bob Elkins of Elkins Institute was quoted as saying:

> If the economy is real good, everyone's got the money to go to school and be what they want to be. And if it's bad, then [proprietary schools] will really boom. In a depression, the government will pay almost anything to train people. [P. 74]

In another speech given at the 28th National Conference on Higher Education, George P. Doherty, president of Bell & Howell Schools, explains in detail the operations and goals of a highly successful proprietary group, Bell & Howell's Institutes of Technology. He expresses their desire that a graduate of a proprietary school be flexible, creative, and a problem-solving individual with improved communication skills. Many of the successful schools have begun to

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express this belief that proprietary students of today are not the dead-end job-trained stereotypes of old.

One of the heaviest blows the private vocational school industry has received was delivered in an article by Jessica Mitford (*Atlantic Monthly*, July 1970), "Let Us Now Appraise Famous Writers." Exposing the Famous Writer's School, she gives an excellent example of a rip-off school employing misleading advertising and high-pressure salesmen. In 1966 the total tuition revenue of the Famous Writers' School was $28 million, $10.8 million of which was spent on advertising and selling and $4.8 million on cost of grading and materials. Famous Writers' School costs an individual $900, roughly 20 times the cost of extension and correspondence courses offered by universities, and Mitford reported a dropout rate of about 90 percent.

But, as Ms. Mitford points out, "The phenomenal success of FWS is attracting students (if not holding them) does point to an undeniable yearning on the part of large numbers of people not only to see their work published but also for the sort of self-improvement the school purports to offer." [P. 53]

At that time, the FTC had received a number of complaints about FWS, and Mitford quotes Robert Hughes, counsel for FTS deceptive practices, "There's a basic contradiction involved when you have profitmaking organizations in the field of education." [P. 54]

This attitude, that profitmaking and education don't mix, lies at the base of FTC's hard attack on the proprietaries, and other

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governmental agencies' prejudices towards them. It is interesting that similar accountability has not been called for in the public vocational training sector which, in fact, makes similar claims of employability and job success.

An article appearing in *U. S. News and World Report* in June 1973 reported the new Department of Defense offer of free education (while collecting salary) to anyone who joins the neww all-volunteer armed forces. This will be accomplished through designating about 1000 high schools, two-year community colleges, and four-year universities as "Servicemen's Opportunity" institutions. It is interesting and significant that proprietary institutions were not included.

A recent paper on proprietary education, a policy paper prepared by Brian Eisenberg for the Office of Education (September 1973), is titled *A Survey of Federal Involvement in Postsecondary Proprietary Vocational Institutions*. Eisenberg explains that proprietary schools are only eligible for federal funding if accredited by the four OE-recognized accrediting agencies, and since only 10 to 15 percent of proprietary schools in the United States are accredited (1419 out of 8439), "most remain unregulated as well as out of the line of receiving federal monies." While MDTA and Vocational Rehabilitation are used extensively by proprietaries, federally-insured loans and work-study loans are just beginning to be widely used. The Veterans' Administration is the big spender in the private sector. Twenty to 25 percent of all GI's in the VA program attend proprietary schools (which don't have to

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be accredited schools, just "approved" programs). The Veterans Administration has expenditures of hundreds of millions of dollars each year a large portion of which ends up in proprietary schools, and since many of these schools are unaccredited, the huge expenditures are subject to little accountability.

Eisenberg states that there are many times more complaints against proprietaries than against public schools and, although he concedes that proprietaries do provide a public service, he adds, "Since many of the students who attend [proprietary] schools are not sophisticated enough to determine the worth of the education for which they are paying--more regulation and scrutiny is needed by the federal government." [P. 3] He does find value in using the proprietary schools in subcontracting by the states for special training programs, however.

Eisenberg also reports on two new surveys: 1) The National Center for Education Statistics has just published a directory of 8268 postsecondary vocational schools. Sixty percent of the schools responded but the enrollment figures have not been tabulated. 2) Current Population Survey, conducted by the Census Bureau, will mail a survey to 45,000 households in October 1973. They predict that 10,000 will reply that a member of the household currently attends a postsecondary institution.

Although most articles and papers like Eisenberg's call for tighter regulation in the private sector, few extend the demand for

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accountability to public institutions. Eisenberg argues that the community colleges don't make the same claims as proprietary schools and therefore needn't be held to it. However, Harold Hodgkinson of Berkeley's Center for Research and Development in Higher Education wrote in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 1973) that since proprietary schools have been included in the new OE definition of "postsecondary education," closer relations between government and proprietary will result, which he feels will necessarily cause more accountability on the part of community colleges. He stresses the importance of both sectors getting in better touch, and perhaps sharing staff and facilities.

Two articles, written from a more positive stance, appeared in a recent issue of *Change* magazine (summer 1973) discussing proprietary education. "A New Look at Proprietary Schools," by Wellford Wilms gives an historical perspective of the attitudes toward proprietaries and identifies attempts to integrate "training" (the transfer of skills) and "education" (what the person does with those skills and how they are integrated with his or her values) as a major problem in postsecondary education. Wilms maintains that colleges and universities have taken on both functions without knowing whether they can or should do both. He points out that fast, effective training can be done (as in the military--which training is usually transferable to civilian occupations) and cites the record of the Swiss-based Organization for Rehabilitation through Training. Training can be easily

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evaluated and institutions that provide it can be held accountable. He sees the emergence of the proprietary schools, with direct links to the labor market, as viable "trainers" and feels that both public and private sectors should be held accountable for what they say they do, and concludes by predicting stiff competition between the two in training the labor force.

The other article in that issue, "The Challenge of Proprietary Schools," by Ellwood Shoemaker, discusses the new dialogue, not extant before 1972, into which the two sectors will necessarily be drawn as a result of the inclusion of proprietaries in the Higner Education Amendments. He gives a summary of major descriptive information (Belitsky) and discusses the often-mentioned advantages of small class size, short course length, flexibility, etc. He expresses the growing sensitivity in the private sector of program duplication in the public schools and states that, in the long run, the proprietaries train less expensively. He concludes with the statement that the public sector will have to begin to deal with the proprietaries on a more realistic basis.

The latest suits by the Federal Trade Commission against proprietary vocational schools, which make promises and do not deliver the goods, are getting a great deal of press coverage that is again casting the proprietaries in a negative light. Although Miller, Katz, and others take the view that it's just a few fly-by-night scoundrels who give the entire industry a bad name, the FTC has launced an all-out attack on proprietary schools in general.

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The calls for stricter regulation have been going on for some time but with few actual proposals on how it could be achieved. One which discusses the problems, as well as proposing some guidelines, is an article in the *Texas Law Review* by Berry and Dunbar entitled "The Proprietary Vocational School: The Need for Regulation in Texas (1970)." This article calls for regulation, evaluation, more tightly controlled accreditation procedures, etc. Written from a legal point of view, it concerns itself with the legal practices of vocational schools. It cites cases after World War II where numbers of proprietary schools took advantage of federal money for veterans' education, falsified cost data and attendance records, and billed the Veterans Administration for students not enrolled. This report gives a history of attempts to institute state regulations and state controls over proprietary education in Texas. They discuss federal controls, the issue of cooperation between the USOE and the nationally recognized accrediting associations, and the difficulties in overlapping jurisdiction between regulating agencies. The report concludes with a proposed legislative bill which demands that all proprietary schools adhere to strict standards, including the posting of a $25,000 indemnity bond against fraud or misrepresentation, to be paid to the students upon such findings.

The need for controls or state laws to prevent misleading vocational school advertising is expressed in another article in *Newsweek* (March 1972), "Vocational Schools: Promises, Promises." It reports

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that state laws regulating proprietaries are lenient and that there is indifferent industry self-regulation.

Donald Young, publications director for Data Processing Management Association, is quoted in that article as saying: "Recession helps these schools. When the economy is bad, people grasp at straws. If you float one their way in the form of a better paying job with status, they'll grab it." The problems of small school size and geographically diffuse locations are cited in *Newsweek* as creating difficulty in control.

Last year, the State of Massachusetts' Board of Higher Education created a Proprietary Institution Task Force to develop a set of criteria to be used in accrediting the proprietary schools. The significant criteria were: 1) degree status, tuition, and refund policy to be clearly stated in school's publicity; 2) financial records and graduate records be made public; and 3) a redefinition be made of the Associate of Applied Science degree, making general education courses optional, not mandatory. The Board suggested transferability of credits from two-year proprietary programs into four-year colleges.

Glancing back over the publication dates of the studies mentioned, it is clear that reliable information on proprietary schools and their students, operations and effectiveness has become more available in the last three years than in all the years before--with more proposed research on the way. Such studies as Wilms' that looks at relative effectiveness of proprietary and public schools have been

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recommended for years but only recently undertaken. Perhaps now, with interest in proprietary schools at an all-time high at the federal level, more funds will be made available for testing the many hypotheses suggested by earlier research. As in other areas where little investigation has been done, much of what is accepted as fact, is in reality opinions that are never verified. Proprietary education, often called the stepchild's (vocational education) stepchild is fighting a common enemy -- our unwillingness to examine what we have accepted to be true. In the case of proprietary education it is time to reexamine these assumptions.

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